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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA: PROCEDURES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FIRM AND LASTING PEACE AND PROGRESS IN FASHIONING A REGION OF PEACE, FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala

Fourteenth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement of the Secretary-General of 21 March 1995 on the programme budget implications of the establishment of a human rights verification mission in Guatemala (A/C.5/49/61). In his report, the Secretary-General estimates the requirements of the extension of the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA) at $12,054,300 for the period from 1 April to 30 September 1995. The additional requirements for the continuation of the activities of MINUGUA are estimated at $10,138,800, taking into account that $1,915,500 remains available from $10,069,600 appropriated by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/220 of 23 December 1994, for the period from 1 October 1994 to 31 March 1995, under section 4 of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. During the course of its consideration of the report, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information.

2. As indicated in paragraph 1 of the first report of the Director of MINUGUA (A/49/856, annex), the Mission was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/267 of 19 September 1994 for an initial period of six months, with

the mandate to verify implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights (A/48/928-S/1994/448, annex I) signed by the Government of Guatemala and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca at Mexico City on 29 March 1994. The Committee notes that, as indicated in paragraph 6 of the MINUGUA Director's report, on the basis of the agreement reached between the United Nations and the Government of Guatemala, the Mission formally initiated activities on 21 November 1994. Upon request, the Committee was informed that the status-of-mission agreement with the Government of Guatemala, requested by the Assembly in resolution 48/267, paragraph 7, was approved by the Guatemala Congress in December 1994 and passed into law in January 1995. Accordingly, the agreement determines the Mission's legal status and defines the privileges and immunities of its members and property (A/49/856, para. 6).

II. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

3. As indicated in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report on the Mission dated 8 March 1995 (A/49/860), since 28 February 1995, the Mission has been fully deployed, with its headquarters in Guatemala City, eight regional offices and five sub-offices. The Advisory Committee notes that the staffing requirements of the Mission would continue at the same number and level of posts authorized by the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, namely 10 military observers, 60 civilian police, 113 international staff (51 Professionals, 35 General Service and 27 Field Service personnel), 72 United Nations Volunteers and 135 local staff. As indicated in paragraph 3 and annex I of the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/49/61), provisions for international and local staff costs, including travel and mission subsistence allowance, consultants and related costs, amount to $9,856,000. Estimates for operational costs, such as rental and maintenance of premises and vehicles and purchase of furniture, vehicles and equipment, amount to $2,198,300.

4. Upon inquiry, the Committee was informed that, as of 24 March 1995, the actual personnel deployed in the mission area included 10 military observers, 30 civilian police, 106 international staff, 72 United Nations Volunteers and 93 local staff.

5. As indicated in annex III of the Secretary-General's report (ibid.), total estimated expenditures for the period from 1 October 1994 to 31 March 1995 were $8,154,100. Of this amount, the Committee was informed that $4,297,493 represented unliquidated obligations and forecasts of commitments. Based on past experience, 10 per cent to 15 percent of these obligations will not actually be required for disbursement. Accordingly, the Committee recommends a reduction at this time of 12 per cent or $515,700.

6. The Advisory Committee notes that the provisions for international and local staff include an estimate of $99,600 for official travel costs. This estimate is an increase of $36,900, or 58.9 per cent, over the previous amount approved for official travel for the period from 1 October 1994 to 31 March 1995. During this period, the Committee was informed that, including unliquidated travel obligations, the amount spent for travel was $52,900. The Committee is of the view that, based on the travel requirements of MINUGUA as

explained to the Committee, an amount of $79,600 should be adequate to cover the travel requirements of MINUGUA during the period from 1 April to 30 September 1995.

7. With regard to the provisions related to freight and related costs ($261,200) (ibid., annex I, sect. B.6), the Committee was informed that of this amount $81,200 will be required to cover the freight costs for the transfer of 22 vehicles from the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. These vehicles were previously funded under the budgetary provisions for the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM). The Committee intends to examine comprehensively the issue of cost/benefit of transfer of assets from Brindisi to various locations of United Nations peace-keeping operations during its review of the Secretary-General's report on this subject to be submitted to the General Assembly, in accordance with the request of the Assembly contained in section VII, paragraph 2, of its resolution 49/233 VII of 23 December 1994, that the Secretary-General report "no later than 31 March 1995, on the feasibility of procedures for valuation and transfer of costs for assets to be redeployed from a peace-keeping operation during its liquidation phase to other peace-keeping operations or other United Nations bodies, and for reimbursement to the special account of the liquidating operation". Other freight requirements of $180,000 were not adequately explained to the Committee and in the Committee's opinion are not required for this period.

8. Under the circumstances, taking into account the above observations, the Advisory Committee recommends that, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/49/L.64 on the renewal of the mandate of MINUGUA, an additional appropriation of $9,423,100 would be required under section 4 (Peace-keeping operations and special missions) of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 for activities during the period from 1 April to 30 September 1995. An additional appropriation of $769,000 would be required under section 28 (Staff assessment), offset by the same amount under income section 1 (Income from staff assessment).

9. Furthermore, with regard to the Secretary-General's request in paragraph 12 of his report of 21 March 1995 (ibid.), the Advisory Committee recommends that, should the General Assembly decide at its fiftieth session to extend the mandate of MINUGUA beyond 30 September 1995, the Secretary-General should be authorized to enter into commitments through the end of December 1995 in an amount not to exceed $4,711,550, or approximately one half of the estimated amount to be appropriated for the period from 1 April to 30 September 1995.